

Happenings

*at the Science Advisory Board
...insuring a solid technical basis for environmental protection*

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NOTICE: Due to the press of business and in response to popular demand, there will be no editorial this month. As balm for this unexpected pain, the SAB Staff will release its FY98 Annual Report during the month of November.

Oh yes, the Bon Mot is included at the end of this month's issue.

1. TENTATIVE MEETING CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

Several of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) meetings below have been announced in the Federal Register (FR), together with additional background information. Readers can automatically receive e-mailed copies of FR Notices by subscribing to the SAB Listserver; see Section 5.a.2) below.

If a series of meetings is anticipated, the number of the meeting in the series is indicated in parentheses; e.g., "(#2)"

If a meeting is to be conducted via publicly accessible conference call, the data is enclosed in brackets: "[.....]"

A glossary of acronyms appears at the end of the list of December meetings.

NOVEMBER

Nov 16	Ozone NAAQS Research Needs <i>Chair: Dr. Joe Mauderly, Lovelace Respiratory Research</i> <i>DFO: Mr. A. Robert Flaak (flaak.robert@epa.gov)</i>	CASAC Chapel Hill, NC
Nov 17-19	Diffuse Norm Report, Approaches to Calculating Radon Risks, Low Activity mixed Radioactive Waste and URRS Closure <i>Chair: Dr. Stephen Brown, R2C2</i> <i>DFO: Dr. Jack Kooyoomjian (kooyoomjian.jack@epa.gov)</i>	RAC 3709M
Nov 18	Economic Analysis Guidelines <i>Chair: Dr. Robert Stavins, Harvard University</i> <i>DFO: Mr. Thomas Miller (miller.thomas@epa.gov)</i>	EEAC Alexandria, VA
Nov 30	Fine Particle Monitoring <i>Chair: Dr. Philip Hopke, Clarkson University</i> <i>DFO: Mr. A. Robert Flaak (flaak.robert@epa.gov)</i>	CASAC /Subc RTP, NC

DECEMBER

Dec 1-3	Various Issues <i>Chair: Dr. Hilary Inyang, Univ. of Massachusetts</i> <i>DFO: Ms. Kathleen Conway (conway.kathleen@epa.gov)</i>	EEC TBD
Dec 10-11	Use of Human Data <i>Chair: Dr. Mark Utell, Univ. of Rochester</i> <i>Co-Chair: Dr. Eugene McConnell, SAP</i> Arlington, <i>DFO: Mr. Samuel Rondberg (rondberg.sam@epa.gov)</i>	EC /Subc VA
Dec 10-11	Risk Comparison <i>Chair: Dr. Richard Bull, Battelle Pacific</i> Arlington, <i>Northwest National Laboratory</i> <i>DFO: Mr. Tom Miller (miller.thomas@epa.gov)</i>	DWC VA
Dec 15-16	Secondary Use of Data <i>Chair: Dr. Morton Lippmann, New York University</i> <i>DFO: Ms. Anne Barton (barton.anne@epa.gov)</i>	EC /Subc TBD
TBA	Models 2000 <i>Chair: Dr. Ishwar Murarka, Ish, Inc.</i> <i>DFO: Dr. John R. Fowle, III (fowle.jack@epa.gov)</i>	EC /Subc TBD

TBA	Peer Review of the IRP Project	EC
	<i>Chair: Dr. M. Granger Morgan, Carnegie Mellon Univ.</i>	/Subc
	<i>DFO: Dr. John R.Fowle, III (fowle.jack@epa.gov)</i>	TBD

Glossary of acronyms for the uninitiated

CASAC	= Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee
COUNCIL	= Council on Clean Air Compliance Analysis
AQMS	= Air Quality Modeling Subcommittee
HEES	= Health and Ecological Effects Subcommittee
DC	= Washington, DC
DFO	= Designated Federal Official (SAB Staff lead)
DWC	= Drinking Water Committee
EC	= Executive Committee
EEAC	= Environmental Economics Advisory Committee
EEC	= Environmental Engineering Committee
EHC	= Environmental Health Committee
EPEC	= Ecological Processes and Effects Committee
IHEC	= Integrated Human Exposure Committee
IRP	= Integrated Risk Project
EAS	= Economics Analysis Subcommittee
ERS	= Ecological Risk Subcommittee
HEHS	= Human Exposure and Health Subcommittee
RROS	= Risk Reduction Options Subcommittee
SC	= Steering Committee
VS	= Valuation Subcommittee
RAC	= Radiation Advisory Committee
RSAC	= Research Strategies Advisory Committee
RTP	= Research Triangle Park, NC
SAP	= Scientific Advisory Panel (FIFRA)(Not SAB affiliated)
TBA	= To Be Announced
TBD	= To Be Determined
[Tele]	= Publicly accessible telephone conference call

2. SAB REPORTS IN PROGRESS

a) **SCHEDULED FOR THE OCTOBER 28-29 EC MEETING**

1) Review of Federal Guidance 13	RAC
2) Review of D-CORMIX Model	EC Subcomm.
3) Review of Commentary on Affordability Criteria	DWC
4) Review of Draft of Acute Reference Exposure Methods	EHC
5) Review of Lead 403 Rule	IHEC
6) Review of Disproportionate Impact	EHC

b) **SCHEDULED FOR A LATER EC MEETING**

1) IRP Final Integrated Report	EC Subcomm.
2) IRP Final Overview Report	EC Subcomm.
3) IRP Risk Reduction Report	EC Subcomm.

- 4) *Commentary on the Utility of Proactive Technical Advice* EEC
- 5) *Review of Uncertainty in Radiogenic Risk* RAC

c) PROJECTS THAT HAVE RECEIVED EC APPROVAL AND AWAIT COMPLETION

- 1) *Review of 1,3 Butadiene* EHC
- 2) *Review of RfC Methods* EHC
- 3) *Review of TRIM.FaTE Model* EC Subcomm.

d) SAB REPORTS THAT DO NOT REQUIRE EC APPROVAL (CASAC and COUNCIL) THAT ARE ALSO UNDER DEVELOPMENT

- 1) *Retrospective Study: Review of the Health and Ecological Effects for the Prospective Section 812 Study* HEES/COUNCIL
- COMMITTEE DRAFT UNDER REVIEW

3. ABSTRACTS OF NEW REPORTS

**a. CASAC Review of the draft Diesel Health Assessment Document
EPA-SAB-CASAC-99-001**

The Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) of the EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) reviewed the Agency's *Health Assessment Document for Diesel Emissions*. While acknowledging the difficulty of the task, the CASAC encouraged the Agency to revise the document, which the Committee judged to be not acceptable as a summary of the current knowledge of the health effects of diesel exhaust inhaled in the environment. Consequently, in CASAC's view, it does not serve as an acceptable basis for regulatory decision making, based on adverse health effects. The Committee's main concerns are as follows: a) Some of the information was judged to be considerably out of date. For example, the changes in diesel engines and their emissions that have occurred in the 1990s is not reflected in the document; b) Neither of the two approaches employed by the Agency to use animal data to generate estimates of human risks associated with environmental exposure to diesel exhaust was found to be supported by present knowledge; c) The document fails to distinguish the effects of diesel exhaust, *per se*, from the effects of PM_{2.5} (particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter), of which it is a constituent; and d) The human epidemiological data from occupational exposures present the strongest current evidence for human cancer risk from inhaled diesel exhaust. However, the Agency's document does not effectively address ongoing debates about the existing data. In the end, the CASAC could not reach a consensus on whether a quantitative, rather than a qualitative, assessment can be scientifically justified at this time. This marks the second time that the CASAC has reviewed the Agency's health risk assessment

of diesel exhaust. In its 1995 review, the Committee identified a number of shortcomings, some of which persist in the current document.

4. COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES IN OCTOBER

On October 13-15, the Ecological Processes and Effects Committee (EPEC) met to review the Office of Water's Index of Watershed Indicators and to continue work on an ecological report card project. IWI is a composite index of information on indicators of water and sediment quality displayed in map format for the nation and for individual watersheds. EPEC reviewed a previous version of the IWI and will continue to offer advice on the data layers and the algorithm used to calculate an overall watershed scores. The Committee also spent time discussing a self-initiated project to develop a framework for ecological report cards. After proposing a conceptual framework, EPEC plans to apply it to several Agency case examples, likely including one or more ecological subobjectives in the Agency Strategic Plan.

On Oct 28-29, the Executive Committee met to address a number of issues including the following:

- a. Taking action on six reports from SAB Committees
- b. Meeting with new Agency leadership (Acting Deputy Administrator Peter Robertson and Assistant Administrator for the Office of Research and Development Dr. Norine Noonan)
- c. Discussing the role of the SAB in non-traditional procedures such as regulatory negotiation
- d. Exploring interaction with other advisory groups at the local, state, and international levels.
- e. Discussing with staff of the House Science Committee the implications of the recent Rep. Vernon Ehler's report "Unlocking Our future: Toward a New National Science Policy"

5. UPDATES

a. Computer News

- 1) SAB Website within the EPA Home Page

You are invited to visit the SAB Website at URL:

<http://www.epa.gov/sab>

The site offers such features as

- a) Full-text reports for FY1994-FY1999
- b) Background information about the structure, function, and membership of the SAB
- c) A rolling two-month calendar of SAB meetings
- d) The most current issue of HAPPENINGS

e) Draft/final agendas of upcoming meetings and draft/final minutes of past meetings.

f) And much, much...well, maybe a little bit...more!

2) SAB Listserver

By subscribing to the free SAB Listserver, you will automatically receive copies of all Federal Register notices announcing SAB meetings, together with brief descriptions of the topics to be covered at the meetings. These notices will be e-mailed to you within 24-hours of their publication in the Federal Register.

To subscribe, simply send the following message, inserting your names,

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listserver@unixmail.rtpnc.epa.gov

6. THE BOARD'S BIO

In this Board Bio we introduce you to Dr. Ishwar Murarka a member of the Research Strategies Advisory Committee (RSAC) and past Chair of the Environmental Engineering Committee (EEC). Dr. Murarka received his Ph.D. in Soil Science and Statistics, in 1971, from Oregon State University. After a stint as a statistician for Texas Instruments, and an Environmental Scientist at Argonne National Laboratory, Dr. Murarka joined the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) where he rose from Project Manager on Aquatic Ecological Effects to Technical Executive for Land and Groundwater. In this capacity he built a research and development program of over \$12 million annual revenue covering environmental aspects of soils, sediments, groundwater and surface water.

Just this year, after 19 years with EPRI, Dr. Murarka founded Ish, Inc., a science and technology company specializing in the assessment, cleanup and management of contaminated sites, soils, groundwater, sediments, surface water, and solid and hazardous waste management.

Dr. Murarka chairs Executive Committee Environmental Models Subcommittee which over the next few years will be providing advice and guidance to the Agency about the application of computer models. He is also a member of Rice University's Department of Defense demonstration project on site remediation, a past member of the National Academy of Sciences National Research Council panel on water issues, and a past member of the Board of Directors for the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST). Dr. Murarka is author and editor of 3 books and over 100 papers.

Dr. Murarka's humor is legion in SAB circles proving that SAB members work hard and have fun. Given his travel schedule for business and trips home to India, Ish is never without his beeper

and business cards reminding folks that "474" on the phone keypad spells "Ish".

7. MEMBERS/CONSULTANTS AND STAFF NEWS

Members/Consultants News

Dr. Vicki Bier, a recently appointed member of the Radiation Advisory Committee (RAC), has been named Area Editor for Engineering by the Journal of Risk Analysis.

Staff News

Dr. Donald Barnes participated as a member of a response panel to a presentation by former-Congressman Don Ritter on a report being released by his National Environmental Policy Institute (NEPI). The October 20 session was a Capitol luncheon, sponsored by the American Chemical Society and the Society for Risk Analysis, and attended by more than 100 folks, half of whom were Congressional staff.

Dr. Jack Fowle, moderated a Capitol Hill luncheon briefing titled "Regulation and Science: Challenges and Opportunities for Congress" in room 2168 of the Rayburn House Office Building on October 20. The briefing was jointly sponsored by the Society for Risk Analysis, the American Chemical Society, and the National Environmental Policy Institute (NEPI). The talks centered on a draft NEPI report "Enhancing Science in the Regulatory Process" that seeks to identify key science concepts of use to Congress and Congressional staff when holding hearings. Speakers included former Congressman and NEPI Director Don Ritter, James Wilson Resources for the Future, Don Barnes Director of the SAB Staff, Jimmie Powell Staff Director of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, James Reisa Director of the NAS Board on Environmental Studies and Toxicology, and Samuel Wilson Deputy Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. Of the 110 attendees, 50 were Congressional staffers.

Also, Jack Fowle was selected for membership in the EPA's Risk Assessment Forum (RAF). The RAF was established by EPA to promote scientific consensus on risk assessment issues and to ensure that this consensus is incorporated into appropriate risk assessment guidance. RAF members serve 4-year terms.

Again this year, Jack is participating in the "Everybody Wins" Program where he spends his lunch hour every Thursday with his reading partner, Michael Lewis, a fourth-grader at the Anthony Bowen school just down the street from EPA's headquarters building.

8. BON MOT

The newly-formed Federal inter-agency Taskforce on Amphibian Decline and Deformities will focus on education and conservation efforts. Its first project is to conduct a poll of public awareness of the amphibian problem. It is hoped that this TADD-poll will eventually give rise to a great leap forward.